

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES
CITY OF MILPITAS
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION**

Minutes: Regular Meeting of Sister Cities Commission (SCC)
Date of Meeting: Thursday, February 27, 2003
Place of Meeting: Milpitas City Hall, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd., Committee Conference Room

I. Roll Chair Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Commissioners/Alternates Present: Arthur, Chahal, Downey, Garcia, Iringan, Swiger, Tsao
Commissioners Absent: Grilli, Lind
City Council Liaison Absent: Bob Livengood
MUSD Liaison Present: Mike Mendizabal

II. Alternates No alternates were seated.

III. Pledge Chair Garcia led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Minutes **MOTION** to approve the Minutes of January 23, 2003.
Approved with corrections to item one, paragraph three, to remove a special session of summer school being convened.

M/S: Swiger/Iringan Ayes: All

V. Agenda **MOTION** to approve the February 27, 2003 agenda.
M/S: Swiger/Iringan Ayes: All

VI. Announcements/Correspondence

Staff announced that Francis Chien from the Silicon Valley Chinese American Computer Association notified us that Dongguan City in China is not able to pursue a sister city relationship with Milpitas because they already have one established with Hartford Connecticut. It is his understanding that China's government does not allow its cities to have more than one sister city relationship with cities in the U.S.

VII. Citizen's Forum

No citizens addressed the commission.

VIII. New Business

1. DISCUSSION: REQUEST FROM CITY OF DAGUPAN TO ESTABLISH A SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP

Staff stated that the commission has a request for a sister city relationship from the City of Dagupan in the Philippines, which is a three-hour drive from Manila. Dagupan councilors (council members) unanimously adopted this request and their application was turned in on January 15, 2003. Romy Manual, President of the Dagupan City Association of Northern California, spoke to the commission and introduced members of the association who were present in the audience. This association is a corporation that has been in existence since 1986 and Milpitas Mayor Esteves has been on the Board since 1996. Mr. Manuel stated that the basis of the relationship at this point would be to foster an information exchange between elected officials and staff. Dagupan leaders believe their city can learn from Milpitas and perhaps the relationship could be expanded in the future.

Chair Garcia asked about student exchanges.

Mr. Manual stated that they are interested in an information exchange at this point. He stated that when student exchanges were to be considered, Mayor of Dagupan noted exchanges would be conducted by civic organizations in Dagupan.

Chair Garcia asked about the nature of the information exchange.

Mr. Manual stated that Mayor of Dagupan is concerned with pollution and traffic issues as well helping children who need foster homes and researching programs for the elderly.

Commissioner Iringan asked about the population of Dagupan and security and crime issues.

Mr. Manual responded that the resident population is 130,000, with an additional transient population of 30,000 to 40,000 during the day. He stated that there are the usual petty crimes and they do not have major security problems. Those problems exist in the southern part of the Philippines.

Commissioner Chahal asked how the relationship between the cities would benefit Dagupan.

Mr. Manuel stated Dagupan is interested in studying various Milpitas ordinances to help improve Dagupan's city services. This would also be their first sister city relationship with a city in the United States. They have a 10-year sister city relationship with a city in Japan. However, this is handled by a civic organization, not the City of Dagupan.

Commissioner Swiger asked about security issues involving the New People's Army communist group in the area.

Mr. Manual stated that this is not a major problem in the urban cities and the group is mostly located in the Southern area and mountain regions.

Chair Garcia asked how the relationship between the cities would benefit Milpitas.

Mr. Manual replied that Milpitas would have a chance to learn about the City of Dagupan and noted that there is a large Philippino population in Milpitas. He stated that it would enhance goodwill, starting with contact between elected officials. The Mayor of Dagupan is planning a trip to Milpitas in April 2003.

Commissioner Iringan asked about Dagupan's civic organizations and involvement.

Mr. Manual stated that Dagupan has three Rotary Clubs and two Lion's International Clubs. The city government does encourage the involvement of civic organizations within their government and these organizations would be more likely to deal with cultural and student exchanges and any coordination should this occur with Milpitas.

Vice Chair Arthur asked if Dagupan had a sister city association, and if not, were they planning on starting one.

Mr. Manual said they currently do not have an association and any plans for one would need to be discussed with their Mayor.

Vice Chair Arthur asked how local citizens would benefit if the exchange were only between elected officials and staff. If the exchange is only between officials, then perhaps a sister city relationship is not needed.

Commissioner Iringan also asked for details.

Mr. Manual stated that he believed the exchange of information between governments would be beneficial. These would be focused on traffic mitigation, environmental and tax initiatives, better zoning and care for the elderly. Perhaps it would be possible to expand the relationship in the future.

Staff discussed options for establishing a "friendship relationship" versus a sister city relationship. She noted benefits of an established, agreed-upon sister city relationship. Staff's recommendation is that the commission consider a sister city relationship between Dagupan and Milpitas. There is an invitation from Dagupan to begin a foundation of understanding between two municipalities. The relationship could be established for a specific timeframe, with a future review to either expand or redefine the relationship.

Chair Garcia suggested the idea of some kind of friendship relationship to begin with for one year. Then based on how it's developing, the commission could determine how to move forward and whether it will grow and include cultural exchanges.

Commissioner Swiger suggested a two-year review because of possible trips.

Mr. Manual stated that the government would visit Milpitas.

Commissioner Iringan also suggested a two-year review.

Schoolboard member Mendizabal stated that a group of people who live in Milpitas help to facilitate the trips and other activities between Tsukuba City and Milpitas and asked Dagupan representatives if there would be a group of citizens from Dagupan here in Milpitas who would help facilitate.

Mr. Manual replied that there would be a core group in Milpitas who would facilitate interest in trips. He also asked if a friendship relationship falls within the guidelines of a sister city relationship.

Staff replied no, that the City, as a member of Sister Cities International, defines sister city relationships separately from a friendship relationship. The description of a friendship relationship is used for agreements that can lead to a formal sister city relationship. A friendship relationship would still go before the City Council to be named as a friendship relationship and the community would most likely host visitors as opposed to the commission.

Mr. Manual again stated that the City of Dagupan is very keen on having a sister city relationship with Milpitas.

Staff requested that the commission look at how to frame this request for a sister city relationship.

Chair Garcia asked if there is a reason that Dagupan prefers an official sister city relationship as opposed to a friendship.

Mr. Manual stated that the Dagupan Council desires the formal sister city relationship.

Commissioner Swiger suggested having a government-to-government relationship for two years, then conducting a review.

Mr. Manual asked about having a possible cultural exchange within the two years.

Commissioner Swiger stated that it should not be a problem. There could be an agreement in which both parties could agree to a cultural exchange if the opportunity arose.

Staff stated that a memorandum of understanding could be written to include this possibility.

Chair Garcia asked how the Milpitas City Manager would view such a relationship in terms of the time involved for Milpitas City staff to process information requests from Dagupan.

Staff will write an internal memo requesting review of any policy issues regarding this concern.

Mr. Manual stated that he believes this will not take much time for Milpitas staff and that the information exchange may happen about twice a year.

Chair Garcia, with consensus from the commission, directed staff to work with Mr. Manual and his association to investigate details and to come back with a draft MOU for a sister city relationship to the commission for review as a work session on the March agenda.

Mr. Manuel thanked the commission for its time and willingness to review a sister city relationship with the City of Dagupan.

IX. Old Business

2. MILPITAS-TO-TSUKUBA 2003 CULTURAL EXCHANGE: JUNE 13 – 22, 2003

Vice Chair Arthur and Chair Garcia received several e-mails from Tsukuba City asking for details about our trip, because they want to start recruiting for host families. Vice Chair Arthur stated that the current round-trip airfare is \$891.00. With her travel agency discount, the fare departing on the weekend will be \$761.80. They will depart on June 13th and return on June 22nd. The City of Tsukuba said they are comfortable with 16 students (8 girls and 8 boys), and the number of adults is open. Both Chair Garcia and Vice Chair Echo will be attending. They spoke with the principals at Rancho and Russell Middle Schools who are helping to recruit students. They have not yet contacted private schools. Vice Chair Echo volunteered to contact St. Johns and Milpitas Christian School and Rainbow Bridge. Also, an invitation will be sent to Council and other city officials.

Schoolboard member Mendizabal will speak with Dr. Black about putting out an announcement.

Chair Garcia requested staff to place the adult application on the city's website, place information in the Milpitas Post and public service announcements on City media, and schedule an orientation meeting for the first week in April in the Committee Conference Room. It was determined that the deadline for applications would be Fri., March 21, 2003.

The City of Tsukuba has given options for different activities. The groups can visit the Mayor. Students would go to the middle school and participate in buckwheat noodle making at the campsite. They would also tour Tokyo and have a free day with their host family. Adults can go to Mashiko Pottery and Yuki Tsumugi Dying and Weaving classes. They can also have a tour of old town streets in Tochigi City (1.5 hours from Tsukuba.)

The City of Tsukuba is willing to pay for transportation, as well as free lodging for adults in their city owned cabins. Vice Chair Echo stated that most cities have lodging for visitors. Their only request is that guests should bring towels and toiletries.

Vice Chair Echo said that Tsukuba is asking if we can pay for their transportation while they are here, since they have been providing transportation for our visit. They suggested paying for transportation instead of paying for food at the Friendship Party – perhaps this could be a potluck.

Staff stated that the commission has a budget session in March and at that meeting they could discuss making a request to the City Council to cover transportation to and from the airport. The budget request could include funds for catering and incidental entertainment costs for the Friendship Party. Staff noted that difficult economic conditions may require that funding requests be prioritized. Chair Garcia estimated that the transportation would cost \$950.00.

Chair Garcia noted that this item would carry to the March agenda.

Commissioner Swiger suggested that the commission should determine any changes to the MOU before the visit to Tsukuba. Staff stated that a copy of the MOU is on the city website for further study.

Discussion followed regarding horseback riding as a possible activity for Tsukuba visitors. It was noted that the number of ranches offering horseback riding is limited and the cost is very high.

3. SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION (SCA) UPDATE

Three Milpitas residents have agreed to participate on this association: Lisa Nakamatsuo, Bonnie Boscsch, and June Romero.

Commissioner Swiger asked about the cost associated with obtaining a non-profit status. He believes it is only a \$10 dollar fee, but asked staff to research this. Staff will check with the City Attorney regarding the cost, however the expectation is that the answer is noted in the paperwork and not necessarily known by the person that prepared the filing.

Commissioner Swiger asked that the commission have an advisory seat from the Sister Cities Association. The commission concurred.

The Chair asked that, pending new information and business, this item be removed from the agenda.

4. SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL (SCI) WEB PAGE & NEW BINDER REVIEW

Staff presented a demonstration of how the Sister Cities International (SCI) web page works by logging into the site and reviewing different areas.

One of the best services offered includes policy guidance and the International Community Resource Center (ICRC). Within the ICRC there are services such as translating e-mail, finding funding opportunities, cities seeking cities, low cost travel insurance, networking, a how-to section, and information about legislative policies. There is a Member Central area with further language translation resources, as

well as alerts for world travel. Information about Milpitas and its representatives has been posted on the site.

X. City Council Report

No report.

XI. Future Agenda Items

1. Draft MOU Sister City relationship with From Dagupan City, Philippines (March)
2. Milpitas-to-Tsukuba City Visit, 6/13-22/03 (March)
3. Tsukuba-to-Milpitas Cultural Exchange, Budget Planning Session, 8/18-25/03 (March)
4. General calendar/procedures checklist for preparing cultural exchanges (TBA)
5. Discussion with Sister City Association representative (TBA)

XII. Adjournment

No further business was discussed with the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, March 27, 2003.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Cuciz
Recording Secretary

Leslie Stobbe
Staff Liaison